



## Chapter XII: Beyond Good...



...AND EVIL





NEVERTHELESS, IT WENT  
MY FAULT IF YOUR  
STUDENTS HORRIBLY  
WASTED AN OPPORTUNITY  
THAT WAS SCRUPULOUSLY  
STAGED FOR THEIR  
INTERVENTION.



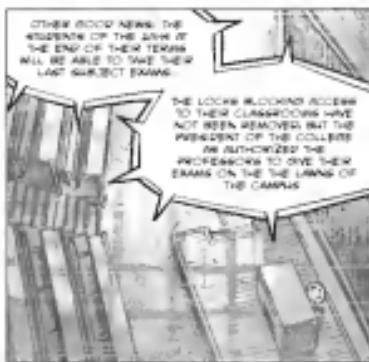


















I'VE BEEN A FIGURE IN WHICH  
ONE MUST SURVIVE. ONE WILL  
NEED TO BE ABLE TO COUNT  
ON AN EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE IN  
ORDER TO COUNT.  
GIGANTIC, BOMB MISSION.  
WE ARE GOING TO FORGE HER  
THAT MEMORIAL.

IN THE MORNING, WHAT I  
NEVER HAVE THE TIME TO  
CREATE, WHICH IS MUSEUM IN  
LIFE. THAT IS THE PROJECT.  
EVEN IF I WANTED TO WORK  
MANY ANYTHING ELSE IN THE  
WORLD.

IF YOU ARE READY  
TO ACQUIRE A LITTLE  
OF YOUR LIFE FOR  
CHANCE TIME WONT  
BE A PROBLEM.

IN THE FOLLOWING TWO  
MONTHS YOU WILL  
DISAPPEAR FROM EVERYDAY  
LIFE. SO DO WHAT YOU  
HAVE TO DO AND BE ON  
CAMPUS AT DAWN.

CARRIE DE HAMM TOLD YOU TO  
NEVER COME HERE IN PLAIN  
CLOTHING. IT IS EXACTLY FOR THAT  
KIND OF REASON THAT WE  
ESTABLISHED OUR DREAM MEETINGS.

ONE REMINDER: THE  
PROTOCOL REQUIRES TIME  
IN MONTHS. TOMORROW I  
WILL LEAVE FOR TWO  
MONTHS.

NO, THANK YOU. YOU CAN JUST  
DISAPPEAR LIKE THAT AND  
YOU'LL APPRECIATE THEM.  
SINCE WE PLACED YOU  
AMONG THE HAMMERS, YOU  
MIGHT GET ANY  
RESULTS.

TONIGHT  
WE HAVE TO  
REACH WE  
DURING THIS  
TIME.

THE SOCIETY OF THE  
HAMMERS IS MUCH MORE  
COMPLEX THAN YOU CAN  
IMAGINE. IT IS A SOCIETY  
IN MY THINNED CORROBORATIONS  
AND IT LEADS THEM TO  
THEIR ROOM. ROOM. OUR  
TIME WILL COME.

I WOULD LIKE TO PERMIT  
MYSELF THE HAMMERS OF  
PROSECUTE... BUT YOU KNOW  
HOW DIFFICULT CAN  
PROSECUTE BE.

CONSIDER THESE  
ABOUT THE MATURE  
ON AN INVESTIGATION IN  
THE FUTURE.

IM GOING





THIS IS AN HOURGLASS THAT  
HAS BEEN CALIBRATED TO  
SURFACE TIME.



WE FILL IT SO THAT  
IT WILL RUN OUT JUST  
BEFORE CHARON'S  
POW.

ABOVE, ONLY  
TWO WOUNDS  
WILL PAIN...

...BUT WHERE  
YOU ARE HEADING,  
IT WILL BE TWO  
TEAMS THAT DO MY

TWO  
YEARS...

THAT SHOULD BE  
SUFFICIENT TO  
FORGE A WORTHY  
WEAPON.

DO YOU THINK WE  
COULD CHANCE IT WITH  
THE ALIENS? CRACER IS  
A TERRIBLE WISH.

AM YOU  
TOO?

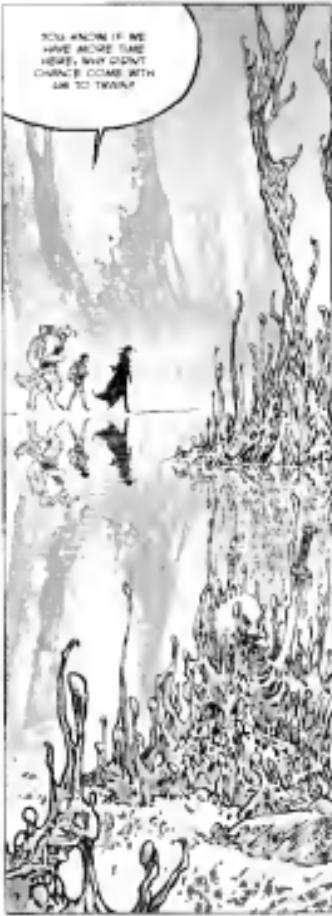
YOU ARE  
SAVING THEM  
HIGHER WELL...

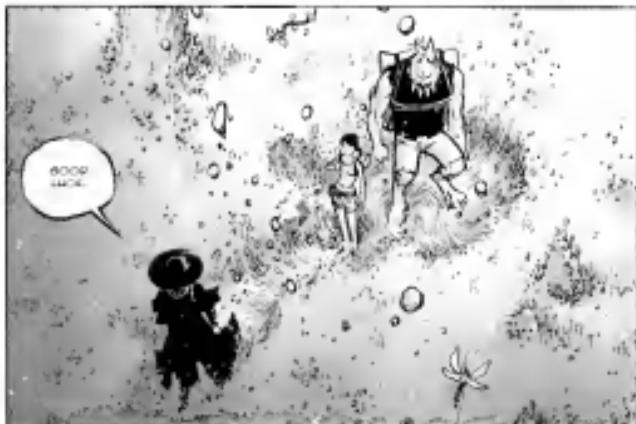
ÖMMÖ  
ÖMMÖ

OUR BIRTH RATES  
ARE GOING TO  
BE FULL MEMBERS  
UP...

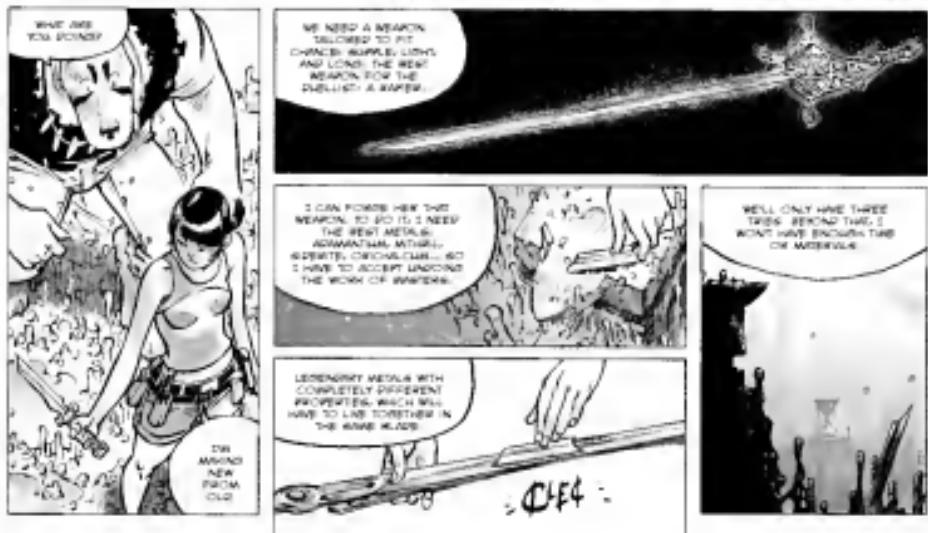
HERE IT IS.



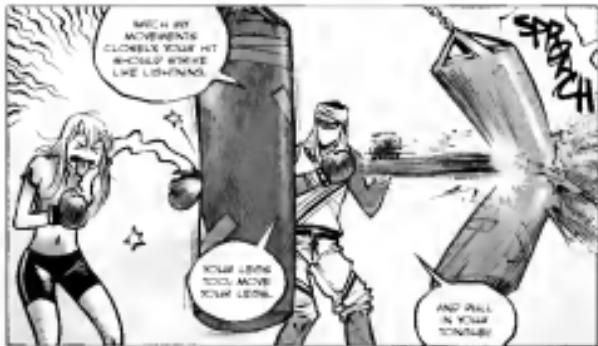


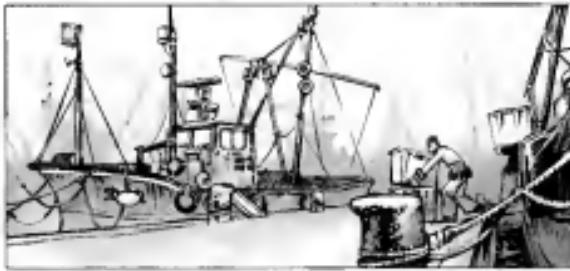
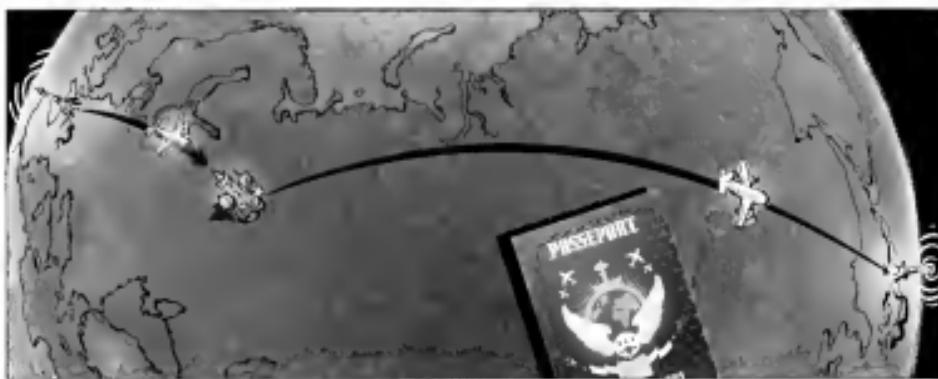














VERY WELL. I  
CONSENT TO  
HELP YOU  
BECAUSE YOU ARE  
READY TO HELP  
YOURSELF.













BY THE  
WORLD, IT'S  
HOT IN HERE!





LOOK AT THIS CARNAGE. THE FIRST TIME WAS A COMPLETE FAILURE. ENVIRONMENT EXPLODED AT THE MOMENT OF TEMPERING. THE DIFFERENT METALS ARE ALL WORKING AGAINST EACH OTHER.



I NEED TO FIND A MORE INDEPENDENT WAY TO BOND TOGETHER THESE EXTREMES.

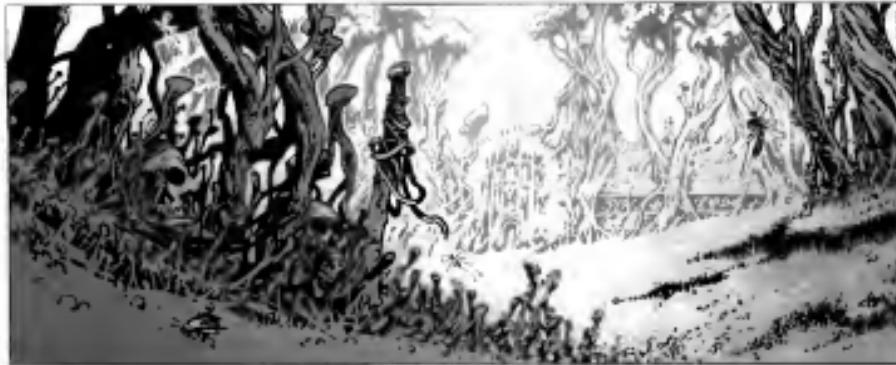


WHAT ARE YOU GOING  
WITH THOSE OLD  
IRONWORKS?



KEEP ON WORKING.  
I'LL BE BACK IN A  
LITTLE BIT.







# our hunt for the demon

## Chapter XVII: Voyage to the Forge of Hell

By Cladheanmor McCload

After the duel between the two hero universities, Auge and Wang Mu wanted to understand how the events of that day were able to come about. We thus looked into the period of time preceding the combat. Unfortunately, other priorities delayed our investigation.

A little over a year later, we retraced the path taken by Ombré, the wolfman, and Xiong Mao, Wang Mu's sister. Their journey took us into a subterranean cavern with no apparent lower limit. Below, a lost world awaited us, inhabited by phosphorescent mushrooms and strange creatures. Without a doubt, it made the greatest impression on Auge, who simply pronounced these words: "I never imagined that Hell would be blue", before lapsing back into the silence that had become a habitual means of self-protection. After hours of exploration, we discovered what appeared to be a smithy. We believe we had reached our goal, the blade could not have been forged anywhere but such a place. However, the encampment didn't seem to have been visited in more than a century. Lichens and other fungi had covered everything, leaving practically no trace of Ombré and Xiong Mao's passage. Finally, Wang Mu discovered a bag of discarded clothes that could have belonged to her sister. Pushing the investigation beyond the workspace, I set foot in an enormous pit full of skeletons of all shapes and sizes. Digging into the interior, I discovered a notebook filled with notes and drawings. Time and moisture had spared it. It seemed to have belonged to the wolf during their time in the Forge of Hell. The incredible events described within could never have taken place in the span of only two months. According to its chronology, they stayed there for almost two years, which explains the stunning physical changes observed in Ombré and Xiong Mao upon their return. We were able to deduce that time passes more rapidly below than on the surface.

I have reproduced in this work a part of Ombré's codex, which constitutes the best evidence of Ombré de Loup and Xiong Mao's passage through this strange and remote place.

### 3rd day

According to Xiong Mao's watch, almost seventy hours have passed since Furencailles left us here below. We finally finished clearing the mushrooms that were growing all over the smithy. They are not edible raw. I tried cooking them too, but all I got out of that was a foul-smelling gruel. On the other hand, they effectively protected the machinery during the years it was not kept up. Apart from a few bolts to tighten, we haven't had a lot of work to do in order to render the smithy operational. Xiong Mao, very excited, was able to start working.

Water isn't a problem: there is a spring that is diverted directly into a large reservoir located in the smithy. It is perfectly clear and doesn't seem toxic. In any case, it hasn't made me sick. However, we will soon be reaching the end of the rations we brought with us: I am going to look for food. The odd black creatures that I remarked at the beginning of our stay seem to be observing us with great interest. For the moment, we haven't been bothered by their vaporous presence.

### 4th day

I'm beginning to better understand how the ecosystem we're living in functions. I've discovered that the fauna includes large hooved animals, who measure about 160 cm at the withers and live in herds of one to two dozen individuals. They were rather skittish and fled once they saw me. There must be other predators hiding out there.

Between strides, these creatures make incredible leaps, considering their size and stature. As there is no one to tell me the name of these animals, I call them "blue gazelles". Incidentally, everything is blue here, in part because of phosphorescent globes that push at the ceiling and diffuse a bluish light.



### 5th day

I've been hiding for several hours in order to catch one of these subterranean gazelles. There are insects busy gathering pollen off these strange mushrooms that grow literally everywhere. For the moment, they are disguising my silhouette. The gazelles more or less obey the same social rules as the caminants at home: a dominant female leads the herd to the best pasture sites and the dominant male is charged with chasing younger suitors.

I'm taking one of these solitary males as my target. I've managed to catch one of these "blue gazelles", although a blow from a hoof almost sliced me open. Their cowardly temperament seems to be their greatest fault: they bolt at the slightest noise. I have an idea of the tactics I'll use next time. In the meantime, with just one of these creatures we have food to eat for three to six days. I discovered that their intestines include growths that are filled with a lighter-than-air gas. I brought one of these funny little gas pouches back, but Xiong Mao burst my trophy with a knife, saying: "Stop bringing disgusting things to camp. They stink and they attract insects!"



5th day

I was able to smoke part of the meat, but I don't have any salt. What's more, the giant mushrooms give off an atrocious smell as they burn. And Xiong Mao glared at me as soon as I started looking at the coal designated for feeding the forge. I've discovered a much colder area close to our encampment: the water that trickles from the ceiling there forms giant ice stalactites. During the time when this place was inhabited, this room must have served as the ladder. I'll stock our perishable goods there.

15th day

I've noticed that the gazelles only eat one certain type of mushroom. I picked a few for our consumption, and they turned out to be delicious as a salad. You have to be careful to remove the pustule-like thing that tops the mushroom, or risk having gas. The fibrous feet are inedible, but might serve as combustible material. I can finally cook our food.

In spite of the absence of sunlight, there are a few green plants that grow here, like these fragrant bushes with small, dry leaves that bring a peppery flavor to our otherwise bland dishes. But before I have Xiong Mao try them, I'd like to be sure the plant's safe.

21st day

The aromatic plant doesn't give me stomachaches.

28th day

The camp was attacked by a medium-sized wild animal, around 400 kg and with fangs about 20 cm long. It must have smelled my presence on its territory and followed me discreetly. It's humiliating to have been taken by surprise so easily. Its flesh was tough and had an unpleasant sweaty taste.



62nd day

We are trying to keep a rhythm of life similar to that which we had on the surface, but the absence of day and night is starting to weigh on us. Xiong Mao still has insomnia; I hear her turning the pages of a book during her turn to rest. The lack of sleep is making her irritable and emotional.

73rd day

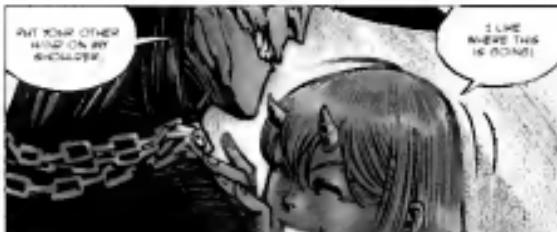
I've found a place that will be perfect to bury Rosebud. The burial was modest, but it was time to let him go. Perhaps I will be able to create new soldiers for our army again. According to Xiong Mao, the reason I couldn't make any others was that I hadn't yet mourned my favorite soldier. We still have a few reduced forces that we left in the tower to watch over Ghanzo.





















# our hunt for the demon

## Chapter XVII: Voyage to the Forge of Hell

By Clindhesmor McCloud

As I thought, Ombre's codex contains no information on the fabrication of the blade. The account lingers on the endless sessions at the forge and details the mechanism of the hammer, the air circulation system, the gears that accelerate the grindstone, etc - a marvel of engineering that Ombre has christened "The Clock". Unfortunately, a large part of this chapter has been destroyed, making the transcription of the text impossible. The rest that follows is intact and describes the flora and fauna of Hell.

299th day

I realize that the small black beasts we saw at the beginning of our stay have completely disappeared. I'm afraid that our presence drove them off. I hope that once we leave, they can come back and live in this area like they were able to when no one disturbed them.

300th day

I've hung around this subterranean forest long enough that I am finally able to present an overview that is more or less correct. I've taken the liberty of giving some odd names to the creatures I've met, otherwise they would all have "the name of an animal that exists on the surface" prefaced by "blue". Everything is blue here, except the fires of the forge.



Figure 169 : the kringgner (fig. 169) : a kind of tiger with long ears that weighs about 400 kg. It was one of these creatures that attacked the encampment. The males don't tolerate my encroachment on their hunting grounds.

Figure 170 : A Boedog, a cross between a boar and a bulldog. Very nasty. Be careful when they are in a herd!

Figure 171 : the infamous mouspiders. I think that these are bats who lost their wings, and yet still retained their way of life suspended on the ceiling, where predators leave them in total peace.



No bigger than my hand (fig. 351) : the bird-dragon, as poorly adapted to flight as to climbing, the activity on which it spends the majority of its time.



## Notes and Credits

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